

# MARYLAND CENTER for SCHOOL SAFETY

## Fiscal Year 2021 Safe Schools Fund Grant (SSFG)

### Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) Application Guidance Document

**Online Submission Deadline: October 30, 2020**

#### Funded through: State of Maryland

Maryland Center for School Safety (MCSS)  
Care of: Maryland State Department of Education  
200 West Baltimore Street  
Baltimore, Maryland 21201  
[schoolsafety.maryland.gov](https://schoolsafety.maryland.gov)

Larry Hogan, Jr., Governor  
Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor  
Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D., State Superintendent of Schools  
Kate Hession, Executive Director, MCSS

**NOTE: MCSS will begin accepting applications for the FY2021 Safe Schools Fund Grant during the first week of July on the MCSS website:**  
[schoolsafety.maryland.gov](https://schoolsafety.maryland.gov)

**Applicants are encouraged to follow the instructions outlined on the website when submitting the applications in order to avoid incomplete submissions. Supporting documentation must be attached to all applications.**

**Eligibility:** The Safe Schools Fund Grant is open to all twenty-four (24) local school systems within the State of Maryland.

All funding is contingent upon the Maryland Center for School Safety (MCSS) receiving the specified grant funds from the State of Maryland. As of the posting of this Notice of Funding Availability, the General Assembly completed appropriations for Fiscal Year 2021.

**Important Notes:** All FY2021 Grants administered by MCSS are State issued Funds. Applicants must provide a copy of their **IRS Form W-9** to MCSS with their application.

**Introduction & Scope:** To enhance the use of the Safe Schools Fund, MCSS is encouraging local school systems to consider partnerships with other local school systems for training and exercise projects. MCSS supports partnerships between local school systems that together determine the greatest need, and therefore, the best utilization of grant funds for their application.

**Application Process:** Applicants are required to apply for grant funding through the *Resources → Grants* tabs on the [Maryland Center for School Safety's website](https://schoolsafety.maryland.gov).

**To qualify, the online application must be submitted no later than 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on October 30, 2020.**

For further assistance, please contact:  
Gifty Quarshie, Fiscal and Grants Analyst  
[MCSS.MCSS@maryland.gov](mailto:MCSS.MCSS@maryland.gov)

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## **GRANT OVERVIEW**

The Maryland Safe to Learn Act of 2018 (Senate Bill 1265, Chapter 30) became law on June 1, 2018. It established the Safe Schools Fund, and ushered in a new approach to school safety and security for Maryland's public schools. The purpose of the Fund is to provide grants to local school systems to enhance school safety. MCSS administers the Fund on behalf of the School Safety Subcabinet, which awards the grants from the Fund. The Safe to Learn Act also established the School Safety Subcabinet Advisory Board, which advises and assists the Subcabinet and agency with fulfilling the statutory duties.

The Safe Schools Fund Grant (SSFG) is one of three grants being offered by MCSS under the Maryland Safe to Learn Act of 2018.

## **SAFE SCHOOLS FUND GRANT - FY21**

The Governor has appropriated \$600,000 in FY21 to the Safe Schools Fund for issuance to local school systems in the areas enumerated at [Md. Code Ann., Education Art. §7-1512](#). The Subcabinet shall review and approve all applications for the Safe Schools Fund Grant prior to issuance. The Subcabinet and MCSS reserve the right to request additional information from applicants related to project descriptions, use of the funds, and budget submissions.

## **PURPOSE OF THE GRANT**

The purpose of this Safe Schools Fund Grant is to provide funding for school safety and security related matters as described under [Md. Code Ann., Educ. Art. §7-1512](#). The grant funds are to be applied toward the cost of school safety-related projects and services outlined below:

### **Planning**

- Conducting and training teams to conduct school safety assessments.
- Drafting emergency operations plans.
- Establishing formal and anonymous mechanisms for reporting safety concerns.
- Developing materials and marketing efforts to inform students and parents about what their local school systems are doing to improve school safety.
- Printing outreach materials and using technology such as apps and other software to assist in outreach efforts and other services.

### **Organizing**

- Developing plans to deliver school-based behavioral health and other wraparound services to students who exhibit behaviors of concern.
- Providing outreach to the broader school community to improve school safety, including heightening awareness of existing mental health services.
- Providing information to students and parents including data related to bus and pedestrian safety, strategies for ensuring personal safety, and efforts of the local school system to improve safety.

### **Equipping**

- Examples include security cameras, emergency communication devices and systems, and other non-permanent safety and security equipment.

### **Training**

- Conducting training on de-escalation and identifying and reporting behaviors of concern. Examples include behavioral threat assessment training, trauma informed care training, and restorative approach/teaching tools.
- Conducting training of assessment teams such as administrators, school staff, support staff, and school resource officers; to identify, properly respond to, and report threats or behaviors of concern that may pose a threat to the safety of an individual attending or working in a public school.
- Providing reimbursement to local law enforcement agencies for school resource officer training<sup>1</sup> provided by MCSS.
- Enrolling school security employees and mental health coordinators in training provided by MCSS.

### **Exercising**

- Developing and conducting school emergency drills.
- Developing and testing traffic control measures in the immediate vicinity of schools to reduce the potential for pedestrian and vehicle accidents.

*All training and/or services must be provided by trained professionals and/or subject matter experts. Training formats may include in-person training, webinars, seminars, and use of technology-based training.*

## **IMPACT OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

Due to the impact of COVID-19, we will consider applications for school safety projects that support COVID-19 related activities. No Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) or COVID related cleaning supplies will be approved.

## **FUNDING AVAILABILITY**

Funding for Grants offered by MCSS is provided by the State and is based on approval from the State Legislature and the Governor. The performance period for the FY2021 Safe Schools Fund grant is from **July 1, 2020 (start date) to December 31, 2021 (end date)**. Grant funds will be obligated by MCSS once a completed Notice of Grant Award is issued. Funds are paid on a reimbursable basis.

***The Safe Schools Fund grant may supplement existing State and local funds for program activities but not replace those funds that have been appropriated for the same purpose***

## **ALLOCATION**

The Subcabinet has approved an even distribution among all twenty-four (24) local school systems. Each jurisdiction may apply for up to the **maximum allowable amount of \$25,000**. In order to be eligible, each local school system must meet the application requirements outlined in this NOFA. The Subcabinet shall review and approve all applications for the Safe Schools Fund grant prior to issuance.

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<sup>1</sup> The MCSS SRO grant can be used for the same purpose.

The School Safety Subcabinet and MCSS reserve the right to partially approve or completely deny grant applications that do not fully meet the application requirements.

## IMPORTANT DATES

Begin Accepting Applications	July 2020
Deadline to Apply	October 30, 2020
Award Approval/Denial Letters	Up-to 30 Days after Subcabinet Decision <sup>2</sup>
Award Start Date	July 1, 2020
Award End Date	December 31, 2021
<b>Quarterly Reports:</b> Quarter 1 – July 1, 2020 to September 30, 2020 Quarter 2 – October 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020 Quarter 3 – January 1, 2021 to March 31, 2021 Quarter 4 – April 1, 2021 to June 30, 2021 Quarter 5 – July 1, 2021 to September 30, 2021 Quarter 6 – October 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021	<b>Due Dates:</b> October 30, 2020 January 29, 2021 April 30, 2021 July 30, 2021 October 29, 2021 January 31, 2022
Quarterly Technical Assistance Award Q&A Call	Dates TBD <sup>3</sup>
Final Project Report	February 28, 2022

## ALLOWABLE AND UNALLOWABLE EXPENSES

### A. Allowable Expenses

Local school systems are encouraged to use the guidance provided under the [“purpose of the grant”](#) when coming up with project ideas for this grant. Below is a list of allowable expenses under this grant. Please note that this list is not all-inclusive.

- Contractual services (e.g., contractual services or personnel, project partners, subject matter experts, COVID-19 related cleaning contracts)
- Materials and supplies<sup>4</sup> (e.g. printing outreach materials, COVID-19 related supplies)
- Equipment<sup>5</sup> and associated delivery and installation costs (e.g., radios, security cameras)
- Training (registration, in-state travel, and materials)

<sup>2</sup> The School Safety Subcabinet meets on a quarterly basis. Approval/denial notices will be sent within 30-days after the Subcabinet has reviewed the application.

<sup>3</sup> MCSS will send out notice at least one week in advance.

<sup>4</sup> Materials and supplies needed specifically for the purpose of executing the Grant. Note: COVID-19 related supplies does not include cleaning supplies.

<sup>5</sup> Any equipment purchased that costs at least \$5,000 or greater per unit is subject to a three-year retention period.

- Security related software
- Other charges\*

\*Other charges must have direct correlation to the overall project or task being performed and will be considered on a case by case basis.

## **B. Unallowable Expenses**

Below is a list of unallowable expenses under this grant. Please note that this list is not all-inclusive.

- Out-of-State travel
- Door entry/locking upgrades
- Structural repairs and fencing/barriers
- Vehicles
- Capital projects

## **SUSTAINABILITY PLAN**

The Safe Schools Fund Grant is not intended to operate, maintain, or sustain a project, program, equipment or any other initiative being currently funded by this grant in perpetuity. Grantee must outline a sustainability plan for initiatives being implemented using this grant funds.

## **APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS**

MCSS encourages local school systems to submit applications that include brief details on the following:

- Project strategy
- Statement of need narrative
- Detailed project description
- Project Timeline
- Budget / spend plan<sup>6</sup>

## **INDIRECT AND FIXED COSTS**

### **A. Indirect Costs<sup>7</sup>**

The Maryland Department of Legislative Services defines Indirect Costs as “overhead expenditures that cannot be directly charged to the program providing services. Indirect costs represent administrative and support services an agency provides (such as budgeting, accounting, and purchasing) to allow the direct delivery of services.” Some additional indirect costs may include depreciation or use allowances on buildings and equipment as well as the costs of operating and maintaining facilities. ***There are no indirect costs permitted in the Safe Schools Fund.***

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<sup>6</sup> Use budget/spend plan template available on [MCSS website](#).

<sup>7</sup> [Indirect Costs](#)

## B. Fixed Costs

Fixed costs **are** permitted through the funding provided by this grant. All details for fixed costs related expenses MUST be clearly outlined in the Project Description and must be specifically and easily identified with a particular project as outlined in the Project Description submission. Fixed costs may include, but are not limited to:

- Salaries/Wages & Fringe Benefits<sup>8</sup>
- Contractual salaries
- Materials and Supplies<sup>9</sup>
- Equipment<sup>10</sup>

## GRANT REVIEW

MCSS shall review each application submission for sufficiency before submitting to the School Safety Subcabinet. The Subcabinet will discuss and award grants on a quarterly basis. The Subcabinet and MCSS reserve the right to request additional information as necessary. Local school systems are encouraged to submit applications in a timely manner to allow ample time for review and approval by the Subcabinet.

## REPORTING AND REIMBURSEMENT REQUIREMENTS

Important: FY2021 Safe Schools Fund Grant invoices **must** be submitted to MCSS via email: [mcss.mcss@maryland.gov](mailto:mcss.mcss@maryland.gov) Download form [schoolsafety.maryland.gov](https://schoolsafety.maryland.gov) All invoices and reports submitted to MCSS must not contain personally identifiable information (PII) or sensitive information.

### A. Reporting Requirements

There are three types of reporting that is required under the FY2021 Safe Schools Fund grant: Safe to Learn Act Reporting Mandates, Quarterly Project Reports, and Final Project Report.

#### Safe to Learn Act Reporting Mandates

1. Before the beginning of each school year, each local school system shall file a report with MCSS showing each public school assigned SROs or the adequate law enforcement coverage.
2. On or before **August 1, 2020**, each local school system shall submit to MCSS an update of all its Public-School Emergency Plans.
3. On or before **August 1, 2020** and each August 1 thereafter, each local school system shall submit aggregate data about threats made against any school or school system facility.
4. On or before **August 1, 2020** and each August 1 thereafter, each local school system shall submit a report on school hours spent in an emergency or an emergency drill.

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<sup>8</sup> Staff, technicians and other personnel(s) needed specifically for the purpose of executing the Grant.

<sup>9</sup> Materials and supplies needed specifically for the purpose of executing the Grant.

<sup>10</sup> Any equipment purchased that costs at least \$5,000 or greater per unit is subject to a three-year retention period.

5. On or before **August 31, 2020**, and each August 31 thereafter, each local school system shall complete the ***Use of Force Report***<sup>11</sup> and submit to MCSS any use of force incidents between a school security employee and a student while the school security employee is carrying out the employee's duties.

### Quarterly Project Reports

1. Grantee is required to submit quarterly reports detailing a summary of work completed including milestones achieved and any obstacles encountered during the previous quarter and every quarter thereafter.
2. Quarterly reports are due **30-days** after the end of each quarter. Please refer to the *important dates* section of this NOFA for quarterly report due dates.
3. Grantee must use the MCSS [quarterly](#) and [final](#) reporting forms. These forms are also available on the [MCSS website](#): Resources → Grants tab.
4. Reports\* must be submitted on time, otherwise, grantee will be considered not in compliance.

### Final Project Report

A final grant report is due to MCSS no later than **45-days** after the end of the grant period. Please refer to the *important dates* section of this NOFA for the final report due date.

*\*Invoices will not be reimbursed if quarterly and final reports have not been submitted.*

### B. Reimbursement Requirements

New in FY2021: FY21 Safe Schools Fund grant invoices must be submitted directly to MCSS.

1. No grant monies will be funded for costs or obligations incurred, or work performed, prior to the beginning date of this notice of funding.
2. Grantee must use the MCSS invoice template when submitting reimbursement requests. The form is available on the [MCSS website](#): Resources → Grants tab.
3. Supporting documentation\* must be included with all reimbursement requests. Examples of supporting documentation include but are not limited to, timesheets, copies of proof of payment to vendors or contractors, copies of original invoices, contractual agreements, proof of completion of work such as photos (before and after), etc.
4. Reimbursement requests shall be submitted on a quarterly basis.
5. Grantee shall submit reimbursement requests via email to [mcss.mcss@maryland.gov](mailto:mcss.mcss@maryland.gov).
6. Final invoice or request for reimbursement related to this grant must be submitted no later than **45-days** after the end of the duration of this grant. MCSS will not process or reimburse any invoices or reimbursement requests submitted beyond this date.

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<sup>11</sup> Local law enforcement agencies will submit reports of use of force between an SRO and student.



*\*Reimbursement requests with no supporting documentation will not be processed.*

## **GRANT MONITORING**

MCSS will perform periodic grant monitoring to ensure that State funds are being used as intended and that the SSFG is achieving maximum impact on the grantee's institution and local community. MCSS will use a combination of quarterly reports, desk audits, and on-site visits as part of its grant monitoring process. Grantees shall be notified at least thirty (30) days in advance prior to a monitoring on-site visit.

1. Grantee is responsible for tracking every aspect of their project deliverables.
2. Prior to an on-site monitoring visit, grantee must make available to MCSS staff, all necessary documentation needed during such visit.
3. Grantee shall allow MCSS staff access to all grants related records to verify grant expenditures and activities upon receipt of notification from MCSS.
4. Grantee shall retain grant documents for the retention period of three (3) years after final invoice submission. MCSS, the Department of Budget and Management, the State Comptroller, the Legislative Auditor, or any combination of the aforementioned State agencies may examine and audit this evidence upon request, at any reasonable time within the retention period.
5. Grantee shall retain reports, activity logs, timelines, and any additional related supporting documentation for any other expenses that are covered in whole or in part by any grant funds.

## **APPLICATION AND RECORD RETENTION**

Each application will be thoroughly assessed to ensure adherence to every required detail. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed. MCSS will provide quarterly technical assistance to ensure compliance with the application and grant requirements.

MCSS will conduct an internal review of each application submitted in accordance with this Notice of Funding Availability. An approval/denial letter will be emailed within thirty (30) days **after** the Subcabinet has reviewed and approved/denied an application.

## **GENERAL AND SPECIAL CONDITIONS**

Grant awards are subject to these General and Special Conditions. The MCSS reserves the right to add Special Conditions, if and when needed, during the life of the award period. These General Conditions outline the post-award policies, procedures, guidelines, and business rules from MCSS for grant funds.

- A.** Any expenditure of Grant funds that is not consistent with the purposes of the grant award, or that violates any requirement, term or condition of the Safe Schools Fund grant or the Notice of Grant Award agreement will be disallowed.
- B.** All grant related activities must be completed no later than **December 31, 2021**.
- C.** Grantee shall ensure that all work performed pursuant to the SSFG and this agreement is completed by contractors and/or staff holding all necessary certifications and licenses.
- D.** Grantee shall ensure that any business or non-profit organization operating in Maryland with which Grantee contracts or partners to carry out the purposes of the Grant is registered and in good standing with the Maryland State Department of Assessments and Taxation.

- E. All work performed pursuant to the Grant shall comply with all applicable State, local, and federal laws and regulations.
- F. Grantee is responsible for ensuring that any equipment acquired using State issued grant funds is protected from theft, loss and damage. MCSS must be notified if any grant funded equipment is lost, stolen, or damaged.
- G. Grantee should establish safety measure protocols for activities taking place on school premises during an emergency, including projects that:
  - i. Maintain open lines of communication between schools and law enforcement agencies; and
  - ii. Incorporate active shooter response training.
- H. All projects shall commence within thirty (30) calendar days of the receipt of the approval letter for this grant. If the project will not commence within thirty (30) calendar days of the starting date of the period of award, an explanation of the steps taken to initiate the project, the reason for delay, and the expected commencement date must be explained and justified in a formal written notice to MCSS via email: [mcss.mcss@maryland.gov](mailto:mcss.mcss@maryland.gov)
- I. The award may be terminated by one or both parties with written notice. If the award is terminated before the end of the funding period, an accounting of the year-to-date expenses must be provided within thirty (30) calendar days after termination.
- J. Any salaries, positions, personnel expenses, contractual expenses, equipment, travel, and other expenses paid for with Safe School Fund grant must be used to **supplement** your organization's existing budget, and **may not replace** any funds that were already included in your entity's existing or projected budget. **Supplanting** is the use Safe Schools grant fund to replace State, federal or local funds which were previously appropriated / budgeted for, or otherwise would have been spent on, the specific purpose(s) for which this subaward has been awarded.
- K. All grant funds related to the award project must be encumbered, obligated (requisitions, purchase orders, or contracts, which are negotiated purchases), or expended (payment of an invoice) by the end of the award period.
- L. Failure to expend encumbered funds within 45 days following the end date of the grant period may jeopardize reimbursement and/or result in the de-obligation of funds. In that event, remaining obligations will be the sole responsibility of the recipient. Reimbursement **is only** for work completed during the grant period.
- M. Any requests for grant realignment or modifications of any kind to any portion of this award must be submitted in writing prior to occurrence. All realignment requests must be submitted using the MCSS template which can be found on the [MCSS website](#). Realignment requests may include but is not limited to:
  - i. Budget revisions of any type, including proposed expenditures in a budget category that was not previously approved in the application stage.
  - ii. Change to staff specified in the personnel category (where applicable).
  - iii. Any change that was not approved when the funds were originally awarded.
- N. When issuing public statements, press releases, or other documents relating to this project, or when conferences, seminars, workshops, or forums are held in reference to this project, the grant award recipient agrees that the source of funding of this project and the role of the MCSS must and will be clearly acknowledged. The grant award recipient will ensure that all publications resulting from this project will have the following language on the publication:

*"The Maryland Center for School Safety funded this project via a grant award from the Safe Schools Fund Grant (SSFG). All points of view expressed in this document, publication, or presentation, are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position of the State of Maryland."*

- O. All final financial reports under the grant award must be submitted no later than **forty-five (45) days** after the end date of the award period.

- P.** Grantee affirms that it shall not discriminate in any manner against any employee, applicant for employment, or clients of services, because of race, color, religion, creed, age, sex, marital status, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, pregnancy, physical or mental disability, or limited English proficiency, so as reasonably to preclude the performance of such employment and/or services provided. The grant award recipient agrees to include:
- i. A provision similar to the one contained above for any underlying contract utilized for services under this award, except for those contracts for standard commercial supplies or raw materials; and
  - ii. A non-discrimination poster, publicly displayed, acknowledging that the entity does not discriminate and provides an avenue for employees, program beneficiaries, and any relative vendors, to file a discrimination complaint directly with the grantee, the MCSS, and/or directly with the Maryland Commission on Human Relations, 6 St. Paul Street, 9th Floor, Baltimore, MD 21201 (410-767-8600), the Baltimore Office of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), 10 South Howard Street, 3rd Floor, Baltimore, MD 21201 (410-962-3932), or directly with the Office of Civil Rights Office of Justice Programs (OJP), 810 7th Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20531.
- Q.** The grant award recipient must promptly report any credible evidence of fraud, waste, abuse and similar misconduct with grant funding to the MCSS.
- R.** All correspondence should be directed to [mcss.mcss@maryland.gov](mailto:mcss.mcss@maryland.gov).